

Message Text

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61

ACTION ARA-20

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P 022045Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6235

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 757

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TD

SUBJECT: 1974 DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SEMINAR

REF: A. STATE 58532; B. POS 699

1. WHILE CALLING ON PERMANENT SECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TODAY ON OTHER BUSINESS, DCM STRESSED URGENCY OF PROMPT GOTT NOMINATION FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SEMINAR IF SPACE NOT TO BE TAKEN BY OTHER CANDIDATES.

2. PERMSEC (ABDULAH) CONFIRMED THAT GOTT NOMINEE WOULD BE MR. MICHAEL BOREL, SECRETARY-MANAGER OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ORGANIZATION (NERO). HE SAID BOREL AND NERO STAFF ARE "ENTHUSIASTIC," BUT NOTED THAT FORMAL GOTT APPROVAL HAD NOT YET BEEN FORTHCOMING. IN MY PRESENCE HE MADE TWO PHONE CALLS AND EMPHASIZED THAT FORMAL APPROVAL MUST BE HASTENED IF GOTT NOMINEE TO BE GIVEN CHANCE AT ACCEPTANCE FOR SEMINARY.

3. COMMENT: WHILE ABDULAH WAS NOT SPECIFIC, CONTEXT OF HIS REMARKS MADE IT PLAIN THAT PRIME MINISTER'S CONCURRENCE WAS STILL PENDING. WHILE SUCH A NOMINATION WOULD NORMALLY NOT REQUIRE PRIME MINISTERIAL CONCURRENCE IN MOST COUNTRIES, PAST TROUBLED HISTORY OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROGRAMS HERE HAS MADE PM PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO OFFERS BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. WE HAVE GOOD REASON TO HOPE THAT HIS APPROVAL AND FORMAL GOTT NOMINATION WILL BE FORTHCOMING SHORTLY AND IF SO IT WILL BE IMPORTANT SMALL STEP BACK TOWARD MORE NORMAL RELATIONSHIP OF EXCHANGES AND SPONSORSHIPS.

MILLER

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